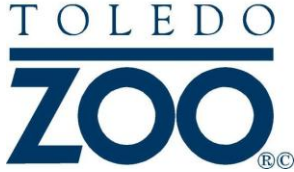




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Siku the Polar Bear Cub Debuts in Arctic Encounter®

Toledo, Ohio—**Siku**, the polar bear cub born at The Toledo Zoo in December 2009, has thrived under the care of his mother Crystal and the Zoo's animal care staff. Now he's ready to meet his public in the Zoo's Arctic Encounter® exhibit. Beginning **Friday, May 14**, the little fellow will be scampering all around, swimming in the exhibit's pool, and just being generally adorable daily from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Siku's name means "ice" in the Iñupiaq language, which is spoken in the northern regions of Alaska. His name was chosen by Toledo Zoo mammal keepers from names submitted by schoolchildren from the North Slope Borough in Alaska. The name was submitted by Isaiah Rexford, a fourth grader from that region. Isaiah and his father will be visiting The Toledo Zoo to see the cub he named in person, seeing the sights of the Zoo and the region through Monday.

The name Siku is particularly appropriate for an animal whose survival depends on the shelf ice upon which they hunt. And as that ice disappears, polar bear populations in the Arctic are in jeopardy. As the only surviving polar bear cub born in 2009, Siku is an amazing ambassador for his wild counterparts. As the Zoo's Curator of Mammals Dr. Randi Meyerson states, "As more and more Arctic habitat is lost to warming climates, it becomes increasingly clear that every cub counts. Siku is not only a joy to watch, but he's also an important reminder of the need to conserve the bears in the wild."

The Toledo Zoo is open daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekends in May) and is located on the Anthony Wayne Trail (US 25), four miles south of downtown Toledo. For more information, please visit www.toledozoo.org or call (419) 385-4040. Lucas County residents are admitted free of charge each Monday from 10 a.m. to noon. ID showing proof of residency is required.

The Toledo Zoo is committed to inspiring others to join in caring for animals and conserving the natural world. As part of that mission, The Toledo Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), a leader in global wildlife conservation. AZA member institutions are dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for visitors and a better future for all living things.